

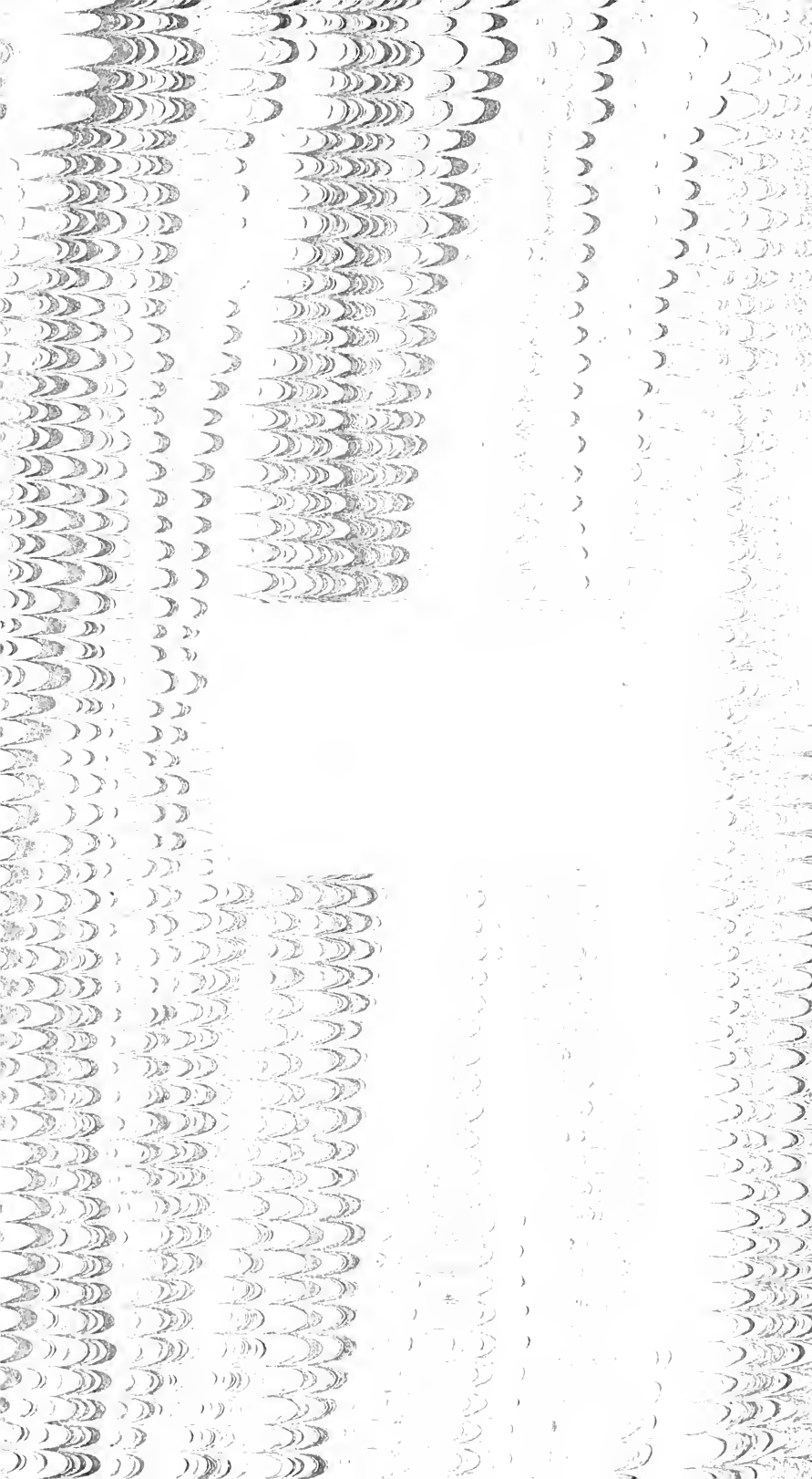
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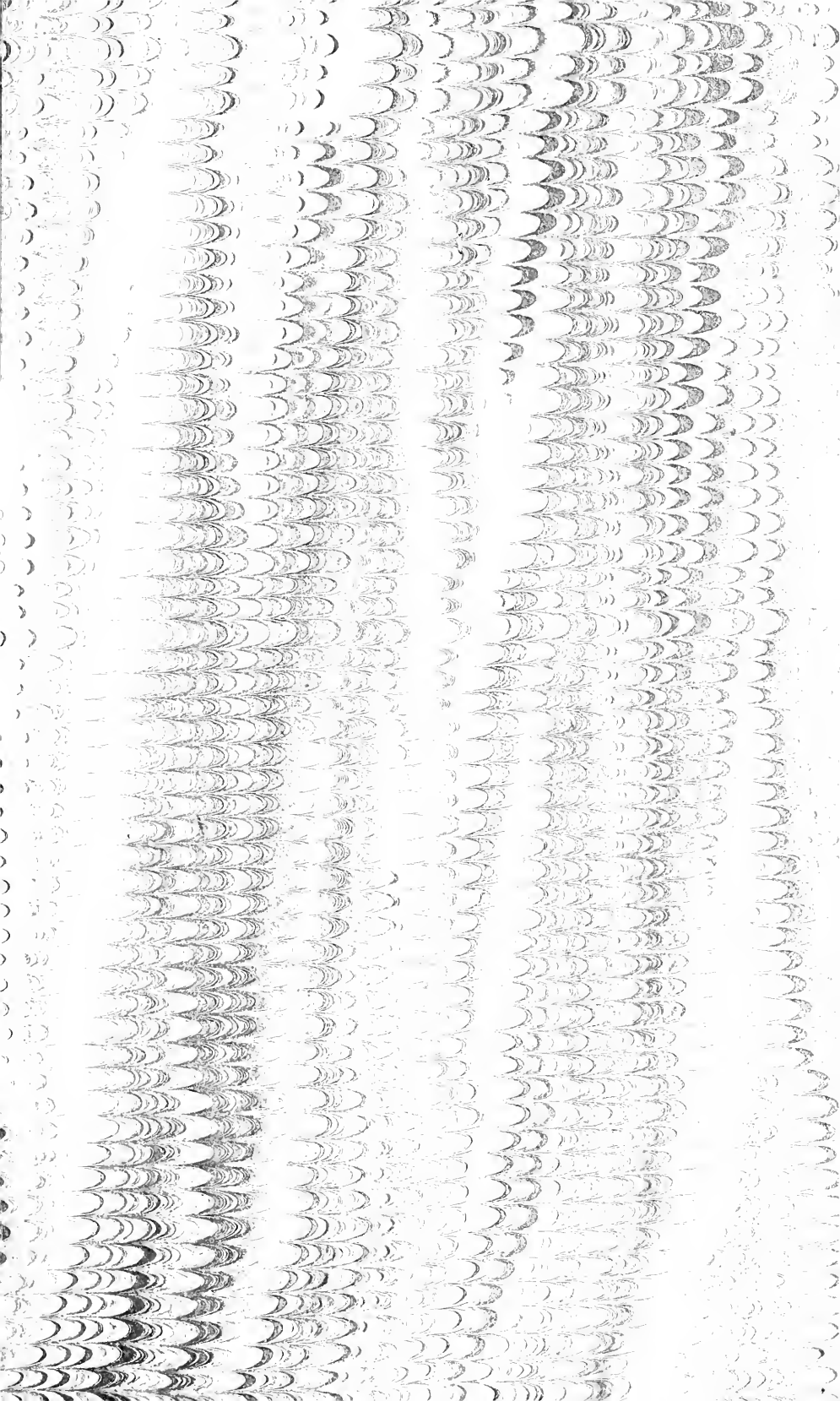
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Washington





ORATION,

DELIVERED AT THE REQUEST OF THE

WASHINGTON LIGHT INFANTRY COMPANY

IN NEWBURYPORT

FEB. 22, 1832.

FOR THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

BIRTH-DAY OF WASHINGTON

BY THOMAS B. FOX

NEWBURYPORT:

Published by T. B. & F. W. Apple

1832.



Feb.
163
F.M.

Newburyport, 23d Feb. 1832

REV. THOMAS B. FOX.

DEAR SIR,—

The Committee of Arrangements for the Centennial Celebration of the Birth-day of WASHINGTON, have unanimously voted to thank you for the excellent Oration delivered by you on that occasion. Having been highly gratified themselves in hearing it, and wishing to give those who did not hear it, an opportunity of reading the truly patriotic, moral and religious sentiments of which it is composed; they respectfully request you to give them manuscript, with a view to its immediate publication.

With respect and esteem,

we are, dear Sir,

Yr. Friends and Obl. Scrts.

ABRAHAM PERKINS,
PHILIP JOHNSON,
JOHN PORTER,
SAMUEL TITCOMB,
CHARLES J. BROCKWAY.
JOHN OSGOOD,
JOHN H. WOOD,
CHARLES JOHNSON,
JOEL SCOTT,

COMMITTEE
OF
ARRANGEMENTS

*To the Committee of Arrangements for the
Centennial Celebration of the
Birth-day of Washington.*

GENTLEMEN,—

Agreeably to your kind request I send you a copy of the Oration yesterday pronounced by me. I thank you for your commendation of my performance, and beg to assure you of my best wishes for your present and future happiness.

Yr. Obl. Scret.

THOS. B. FOX.

Newburyport, Feb. 23d, 1832.

ORATION

IT is well to celebrate the birth of good and illustrious men. True greatness should ever be made immortal, by the grateful remembrance of succeeding generations. Thus the glory of the fathers becomes a lofty motive of action to the sons, and another security is given for the perpetuity of virtue. The festal day may be made almost a holy day ; for to dwell upon examples of worth and integrity must be as beneficial as it is pleasant ; and earth seldom beholds a scene more glorious than the congregation of thousands of the free and intelligent, to cherish in their hearts, and honor with their lips, those, who, loving mankind with mind and heart and strength, devoted themselves to the promotion of their highest welfare. Such a scene earth beholds this day. Many are met throughout our land to dwell together as fellow-countrymen, on the excellencies of that great man, who drew his first breath of life one hundred years ago. This, then, is a season of soul-moving interest to every thoughtful man. The mind spans, almost at once, a century crowded with events, momentous and great, yet, familiar as the story of the passing hour ; it marks the laying on of the rod of oppression ; it observes weakness, with the supernatural strength of righteous indignation,

break that rod and crumble it to the dust; it beholds a nation born in the midst of war and distress, rocked in the tumult of a revolution, nurtured by stern and giant-minded men, and raised to a vigorous and powerful youth; it sees a whole people, pushing aside hoary tradition, time-hallowed prescriptions, and going at once, in spite of the frowns of kings, the ridicule of nobles, the fears of abject slaves, to those foundation principles upon which all governments ought to rest, declaring 'that all men are born free and equal,' and vindicating the truth of this declaration by fifty years of almost uninterrupted peace, of growing wealth and intelligence. This is the sublime vision which this hour presents; so sublime, that, were it not for the audible voice of those, who lived amidst, and helped to achieve, these great things, we might almost deem it the magnificent dream of an angel. Our country rises before us, a beautiful and massive fabric; stupendous in its proportions; complete in all its parts; built as it were in an hour. Yet the framers of this dwelling-place for the rights of man, were, under God, men like ourselves. They were strengthened for the work, by the heavy burthens of tyranny; animated to its commencement by a love of freedom stronger than death, and sustained to its completion by that courage, which belongs to a pure mind and a righteous cause. Among the first of these great workmen, these Cyclopean architects, who cleared the ground for the cornerstone of the edifice, and helped to lay it deep, solid, and enduring, was GEORGE WASHINGTON.

I shall now, on this occasion, give a sketch of the life, and an extended delineation of the character of WASHINGTON.

ron I rejoice to believe this work would be needless, were I able to perform it. The deeds and the virtues of the Patriot, are, I trust, as well known, as dearly honored, by you all, as the countenance of a friend. His career is too closely united to the history of our nation, to be left unread; and the qualities of his heart and mind are too much needed, as examples by freemen, to be soon forgotten. He will be revered for ages, as one of the first and finest specimens of that noble character, a true republican. But though I thus shrink from any endeavor to portray fully the character of WASHINGTON, I cannot properly omit the topic altogether.

The value of the striking deeds and uncommon lives of great men consists, not so much in the admiration they excite, as in the illustrations they afford of the strength of intellectual and moral power. Exhibitions of greatness, beyond their temporary effect in accomplishing the purposes for which they are made, are to be dwelt upon and studied, as indicating the nature and worth of principles. To describe, then, the career of WASHINGTON, to tell of his worth and power, as shown forth in his conduct, as a general, a statesman and a citizen, might awaken the listening ear and swell the bosom with emotion. But this would be a transitory effect. The character, the springs of action, the animating motive, the governing maxims, the sources of that spiritual power, manifested by this illustrious man, are what we would know: and we would know these, that we may imitate them—that they may serve as models whereon to mould true greatness.

The same field of action, he trod, may never again

be presented: yet so long as man is man, there will be a ceaseless call for such mental power and moral principle, as he exhibited. A character, which stood the trials of the world so well, which rose so much above mortal weakness, which set forth so constantly the dignity and divinity of human nature, we ever need, as a pattern and guide. It has been proved and is known to be, what is safe and what is needed. We dwell not, then, upon the external actions of WASHINGTON; but pass beyond them, use them only as so many lights to guide us into the inner sanctuary of the soul; thus shall we best understand, appreciate and learn how to follow this wonderful man. It is not the hand that executes, but the mind that conceives; not the outward and visible machinery, but the designing, creative power within, which deserves attention. But, besides looking beyond outward conduct, in order rightly and usefully to appreciate the character of WASHINGTON, we must dispel the illusions of the imagination. A grateful nation, unmeasured eulogy, the deep affection of generous and wise-hearted freemen every where, have so surrounded him with glory, that, when we endeavor to bend our minds to an analysis of his nature, we gaze, at first, upon ‘bright confusion.’ We see a patriot, a soldier, a hero, an honored son of liberty, crowned with laurel and arrayed in the shining garments, with which fond imagination decks the mighty; but we do not see the man. His greatness, hallowed by his countrymen, is indefinite. We must wait for the first glow of admiration to subside, and then examine, with a calm and settled mind, his well-disciplined and exalted spirit, if we would render unto him rational homage.

Looking thus, with an undazzled eye, upon WASHINGTON, we see at once, he was not a brilliant genius, but a self-governed man; all whose powers and faculties and passions were marshalled in proper order, and were beneath the vigilant sway of an enlightened and purified will. There is no one point, gleaming with intense brightness; but it is the steady light of his whole life, which constitutes his real superiority. His single acts are not astounding. There was in him no flashing out of great energies and magnificent talents, on certain great occasions; spending their force in single efforts, and then becoming powerless, till the trumpet call of necessity summoned them forth again; but he was wonderful for a sustained and ceaseless strength, an unfaltering resolution, which was evidenced in his continued progress. To describe most great men, we enumerate certain splendid deeds; to convey an idea of WASHINGTON, we must speak of the whole man at once: For the same powers of mind were exerted at Braddock's defeat, during the war of the revolution, in the presidential chair and as a private citizen. The same caution in forming opinions, and firmness in adhering to them; the same reverence for justice and benevolent humanity; the same power over circumstances and freedom from despondency; the same sound judgment and untired energy, are seen throughout his whole career. In some instances, the scenery and drapery of the stage is more sublime, but the great actor is always the same. Look at him, amid the awful grandeur of the crossing of the Delaware; look at him, when reasoning down the excited feelings of the ill-treated and deceived officers of his ar-

my; look at him, when signing the proclamation of neutrality in the midst of a half-frantic nation; look at him, as he delivered his farewell address and retired to the peacefulness of Mount-Vernon; look at him every where, under all circumstances, joyous or gloomy, in action or at rest, you see always the calm, serious, self-controlled, independent man.

Of the early history of WASHINGTON we know but little; but the fruits of his maturity afford some evidence of the nature of his early culture. Probably the source of his character was deep reflection. This indeed, is the source of all true and worthy character. Real greatness is the result of self-knowledge; a just estimate of our powers, of the manner and direction in which they should be exerted; and such can only come from deep thought, intense self-scrutiny. WASHINGTON won his first victory over himself. He ruled his spirit; he subdued and brought under habitual control his strong feelings; so that the ardent youth became an even-tempered man. This victory, which gave him full possession of himself, added to that accuracy of thought, produced perhaps by his early attention to mathematics, laid the foundation of his character. A motive only was wanting to bring him into action. That motive was furnished by holy hatred of tyranny and rational love for his native land. Thus prepared, thus urged forward, he went forth. He met dangers and surmounted them. He met difficulties and solved them. He knew that

——— ‘Rightly to be great
Is, not to stir without great argument;’

therefore the storm of passion could not move his firmness.

Party strife could neither shake his purpose, nor warp his perception and love of the truth. He had built up his soul to endure the tempests of the voyage of life; he weathered every gale, and reached the shores of eternity, unharmed and richly laden with tried virtues and merited honors. Such was the character of WASHINGTON, with the absence of but one feature, its crowning excellence, its superior beauty, without which there would not be completeness; he bowed down his soul beneath the sanctifying power of religion; thus bearing glorious testimony to the eternal union of true greatness and true goodness. Throughout his life, there is a constant recognition of the over-ruling providence of God. On almost every public occasion, he lifted the voice of supplication. His attention upon public worship, was never unnecessarily omitted. His private character was without reproach; and he was not afraid to die. These things prove him to have been a religious man and a Christian. If they do not, listen to the prayer in his last communication to the Chief Magistrates of the States, at the close of the war. "I now make it my earnest prayer, that "God would have you, and the State over which you "preside, in his holy protection; that he would incline "the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subor- "dination and obedience to government; to entertain a "brotherly affection for one another, for their fellow-cit- "izens of the United States at large; and particularly for "their brethren who have served in the field. And, fi- "nally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dis- "pose us all to do justice, to love mercy, to demean our- 'selves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of

“mind, which were the characteristics of the divine Author of our religion; without an humble imitation of whose example, in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation.” Such was the wise and solemn petition of that great man, whose motives were above suspicion, whose judgments were never rash, and who, by devoting himself to the service of his country, and by constantly reverencing the laws of God, won from the tyrant’s grasp, this fair land to be the birth-place of liberty, and gained for himself the filial love and esteem of a nation of freemen.

I have thus spoken briefly of WASHINGTON. But directly to commemorate him is not the sole purpose, for which we hallow this day. Did we come hither only to exult and rejoice, we should be wanting in the seriousness and thoughtfulness of true republicans: For, while dwelling upon our fathers’ virtues, it becomes us to remember, that we stand in their places, and inherit their duties. And, as we think of the great Patriot, we must be mindful, that he was in vain a patriot, if we are not like him. Therefore, on this occasion, there should be uttered, in harmony with the voice of joy, a voice of solemn instruction; and thoughts of duty should mingle with and chasten our feelings of gratitude and pride. The day would pass in profitless amusement, did we hear no words of counsel addressed to us as citizens of these United States. I shall make no apology, therefore, for attempting a short discussion of a virtue, which was so bright and strong in the character of WASHINGTON; I mean PATRIOTISM. I select this topic, because it belongs to the associations of the day, and because it is

of great practical importance. Our whole hope, as a nation, depends upon the truth and extensiveness of our view of the duty we owe to our country. Until the public mind is pervaded and sanctified, by a spirit of pure and enlightened patriotism ; until our citizens, as a body, regard their political rights and privileges, as solemn and responsible trusts, the faith of the disciples of republicanism in the stability of our institutions is vain. That such a spirit and such a regard is so prevalent and so deeply felt, as to warrant an idea of perfect safety to the nation, will not be asserted by observing and thoughtful men. The crowd, on our days of rejoicing, shout for liberty. Orators please the ears of the people, with glowing descriptions of our glory and prosperity. But this is no sign that we rightly understand and value our civil privileges ; or that strict and elevated views of our political duties, are a part of our national character. Words and professions are but empty sounds, unless accompanied by vigorous action. If bargain, intrigue or corruption are, to any great extent, in the land, then a saving patriotism is not there. Demagogues can only rise, in republics, by the will of the people ; when demagogues therefore, do rise, it is a sign that the people are wanting, either in the knowledge or practice of their duty. Applying these remarks to our own history, all must see that our virtue and integrity as citizens are not as strong and active as they ought to be ; that our conduct does not equal our professions ; that there is a wide difference between our doctrines and our practice ; and that we often need to be addressed in the strong language of warning and instruction.

I would say, then, at this time, that true love of country is not a mere sentiment of the heart, but a calm, rational, deep-rooted principle of the soul, directed by an enlightened conscience, and guarded by an unfailing reverence for what is right. The mere feeling of attachment to the land of our birth is not patriotism. That sensibility, which calls forth tears at the sweet sound of the music of our native hills, is not patriotism. They are germs, from whence it springs, but not the thing itself. Such natural affections, such impulses, are the material, out of which the will and the understanding are to make virtues, but they are not virtues in themselves. When the love of our native land, so analogous to the instinctive love of the child for its parent, is cultivated and expanded, beneath the care of reason and religion, then, but not till then, it becomes patriotism. For patriotism, I repeat, is a deep and settled, a purified and enlightened principle of the soul. It belongs to man, as a part of his spiritual developement. It is something to which he has educated himself. It is a manifestation of the second great commandment of Christianity, confined to a smaller sphere, for the sake of more vigorous action. The world is cut up into families, communities and nations, and affection for our native land, and our fellow citizens, feelings dependant upon local associations, belong to our nature, only that the principle of benevolence, by being confined within narrower limits, may act with greater intensity and strength. True patriotism, then, is a form of philanthropy; an exhibition of love to man. It is the product of an instructed mind, and a pure heart. It is the devoted servant of virtue, and seeks, forever, the

common and the highest good. It embraces the nation with fervent regard, and serves it with unfaltering devotion. It flings itself manfully into the contest, between liberty and despotism; and while it beats back the usurpation of the latter, it preserves the former from the polluting touch of false-hearted licentiousness. In fine, it is a high-souled virtue, born of wisdom; directed by love, and bowed, in reverent obedience to the laws of God. This is patriotism; this that love of country, which acts with vigor, and always in a righteous cause. Upon its existence, depends the welfare of mankind. As it grows and strengthens, so will the nations advance, and the spirit of man brighten into a likeness of divinity. Its efforts shall build up the waste places of the earth, make the desert to blossom as the rose, and the wilderness to be like Eden.

But this general description of Patriotism, is not enough: we must consider its operations more in detail. Genuine love of country, assumes as its fundamental principle, that a constant regard, for right, truth, and justice, is as much required in the nation, as in individuals; and that a man is as much bound to recognise the moral law, in all his acts as a member of the community, as in the more private relations of life. The hoary falsehood, that the public, or the agents of the public, may be more lax in virtue than an individual man, is banished with contempt from its presence. It knows no reason, why government may break solemn treaties, when the laws of that government punish, severely, the private citizen who breaks a private contract. It cannot see by what code of morals, violation of public faith is expedi-

ency, and violation of the word of an individual, falsehood. It does not understand where savage civilization, gets the right, to nullify the independence of civilized savages. It cannot tell, why men are bound to be less candid and honest in the hall of Representatives, in the chamber of the Senate, in the chair of State; than on the exchange, in the house of merchandise, or by their own fire sides. It knows but one law of right, and that it firmly believes is obligatory every where; in the heart of the humblest individual, at the councils of nations, in the courts of heaven. This, I know, is a doctrine, at which politicians have sneered. They have called it the ravings of well meaning enthusiasm; a theory belonging to Utopia; but too shadowy, too refined, for practical use in the business of legislation, and not strong enough for the turbulent passions of men. This is the sophistry with which statesmen have but too often endeavored to justify crafty policy, intrigue, and corruption. But we hope, we believe, the day when such speciousness blinded the eyes of common sense, is fast passing away. We trust, that, urged on, by all the means in operation, for its elevation and improvement, the public mind is coming up to the truth, that the law of God is as binding upon nations as upon individuals. We trust, that, as a people, we are beginning to believe with WASHINGTON, ‘that there exists in the economy and course of nature, an indissoluble union between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity; and that the propitious smiles of heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which

heaven itself has ordained.' We trust, that, as a people, we are beginning to believe this; we thus trust, because the philosophy of the doctrine is so simple, that a child may understand it. It rests upon this obvious fact,—that the collecting together of things of the same kind, though it may increase their bulk, does not alter their character; that human nature bound up into a mighty nation, is the same as when existing separately in individuals, under the same laws, and affected by like influences; therefore, if honesty be the best policy, for one man, as a man, it must be so, for twelve millions of men, as a great republic. This is the simple logic,—leading straight forward to a principle, in harmony with the whole economy of the universe. True patriotism, acknowledges this principle, and carries it into practice. But how? By finding out the source of power, and by endeavoring to purify that source.

The source of power, at the present time, is different, in different nations; therefore, the conduct of true patriotism, will likewise be different. In some cases, the authority of the king or emperor, is too firm to be easily shaken. This is the state of Russia. There, then, the lover of his country, should strive to influence the mind of the despot, so that if men must be slaves, and have a master, they may be slaves well treated, and have a merciful master, till the day of deliverance comes. In other instances, the people may have strength and intelligence enough, to push ignorant and imbecile tyranny from the throne. This, we hope, is the state of France. There, then, let the patriot strive to guide and regulate the movements of the multitude, in an honest and safe way; let him go forth, and amid

the storms of revolution, help lay the foundation of a new government, in truth and justice. In England, again, power is divided, and with tolerable equality; there civil war, for the rights of the people, must be long, bloody, and of doubtful issue. There, then, it is the part of patriotism, to reason and negotiate; to point out how the clashing interests may be reconciled, to convince aristocracy of wealth, title, and privilege, that it is best to be an aristocracy of talent and virtue, and to persuade the people to keep quiet, and let their cause be fairly fought by arguments in both houses of Parliament, and by affection and love of justice in the bosom of the king. Thus it appears, that, as the source of power is various, so, also, must the efforts of patriotism be various.

But how shall it act here, in our republic. Here the whole force of real authority, lies in public opinion; that is, in the opinion of the greater number. Laws, with us, are instruments of the majority, and do not emanate from a power independent of the people. The constitution is a collection of resolutions, by which the public chooses to be regulated, and the various branches of government, are the means by which its resolutions and intentions are carried into effect. Our executive and legislature, are but indications of the will of the people; and their calm and sober, quick or feeble movement, like the pulse in the human frame, inform us of the health of the body politic. It is not then to rulers or government, that true patriotism, will, here, directly address its efforts; but it will rather bend its whole energies to reform, or preserve uncorrupted, public opinion. This it can do, by enlightening the minds, quickening the consciences, and making

pure the hearts of the citizens ; and to do this, is to be a true patriot. Men mistake, when they suppose, that the destiny of the nation is in the hands of public officers. Our prosperity depends upon those, who act upon the minds, and mould the characters of men. Whoever promotes general intelligence, and general virtue, be his sphere more or less limited, is a benefactor to his country. Whoever seizes with a strong grasp, upon great truths, and brings them down, and impresses them deep upon the souls of men ; whoever trains up the reason, regulates the judgment, increases the knowledge of his brethren ; whoever, in fine, awakens mental power, and moral strength, in others, he is the true patriot, the man of influence. Lord Brougham, has said, ‘the schoolmaster is abroad’: we say, that schoolmaster is the great and mighty sovereign, who is to hold sway over the human race. Every thing that goes to move mind, goes to move the nations. Patriotism, then, in its highest and best sense, is to promote the intelligence, and preserve the morals of the people. The parent, who, by example and precept, gives to the State, educated and virtuous sons, is a patriot. The inhabitant of the smallest town, who pours out his wealth, and exerts his influence to assist the spiritual well being of his fellow citizens, is a patriot. The minister of the Gospel, who unfolds the clear, simple, and elevating truths of the religion of Christ, and convinces men that ‘godliness hath promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come,’ is a patriot. The statesman, who, too great to cater for popularity, seeks with a large mind, the true interests of the people, holding it honor enough for mortal

man, to be allowed to help onward the progress of his race, is a patriot. Every strong and virtuous writer, every eloquent and sound hearted speaker; in a word, every man of sense and of principle, who looks upon human nature and desires its improvement, as a philosopher and a christian, is a patriot; and as such men grow numerous, so will our nation prosper. When their voice is stronger, then truth shall be proclaimed; when they awake from their apathy, put on their armor, and go forth to battle, with crafty politicians, bold disorganizers, the desperate foes of good order and pure government, they shall prevail, for they unfurl their banner, in a cause which the Almighty loves, and, if need be, ‘the stars in their courses’ shall fight for them. Let but good men, calm, rational, intelligent men, band together, exert themselves as one man, and the day will come, and come soon, when the everlasting laws of God, shall be felt and obeyed by the nations; the day will come when every citizen shall perform his public duties, as if he realized his responsibility, as if he knew and felt that he must give an account at the bar of God, for the discharge of every official act. That this period, this golden age in politics, may come, every true patriot should strive without fainting, to spread knowledge and virtue among the people. He should put forth his whole strength to induce them to reverence what is right. He should tell them, that our very existence as a nation, depends upon our unfailing obedience to the moral law. He should say to them, that the great doctrine, ‘righteousness alone exalteth a nation,’ is at once the voice of a generous heart, the deduction of right reason, the clear tone of an enlightened conscience, the

sublime declaration of the word of God; that it should be deeply engraven on every soul that liveth, should be present to every voter as he goes to the ballot box, be pointed out as a maxim to every public officer, written with letters of light on the halls of Congress, and uttered with a voice of thunder in the ears of every President of these United States. When this is done, when this truth becomes the great moving principle of our nation, then shall we rise to a degree of glory, earth never before hath witnessed.

The first and greatest principle of true patriotism, is, then, the promulgation of virtue and intelligence. In carrying this principle out in practice, the attention will be directed to the correction of many abuses, inconsistent with it; and to the advancement of many things, more or less favorable to its success. It will be seen, at once, that it holds no fellowship, with violent party spirit, or sectional prejudices; that it is opposed to the passion for wealth, and the luxuriousness consequent upon its possession. He who obeys it, must rise above geographical limits, and, in general, regard his fellow citizens, not as inhabitants of certain districts, but as men. He must be fully persuaded, that, to a nation, as well as to an individual, great riches is a very equivocal blessing; not always favorable to virtue. Besides, this, he must ever be mindful, that it is not this generation, nor the next, who are to reap all the fruits of the operation of his patriotism; but distant posterity. In every enterprise, then, the question should be, as far as mortal may determine, what will be the *ultimate* consequences of this course of action? How will my efforts affect the condition of remote ages:

I, and my cotemporaries, will soon pass away ; but millions, yet unborn, are to be benefitted or injured, by what we are now doing. These are solemn interrogatories, and they bring home, the feeling of responsibility, to the hearts of good men ; and their solemnity is increased, when we go forth, and mark the condition of the land ; when we see how blind are many of the citizens of this great republic, to the future consequences of their deeds. To gain a present end, to elevate a favorite candidate to the chair of State, the press is prostituted, the passions of the people inflamed, and the future character of the nation is sacrificed to the Moloch of ambition. This is a sad thought ; but it is true. The hall of legislation, has almost ceased, to be the collected wisdom of our land, sitting in wise deliberation, in calm discussion, upon our mighty interests, as a growing country, full of strength and power, which must be used to the promotion of true greatness, or abused to minister to the wickedness of a degraded people. On the contrary, the Capitol is becoming an arena for the strife of political gladiators. Unless this is ended, unless the people put out the spreading corruption, the United States will be like other lands, where the necks of the citizens are but stepping-stones, by which conquerors and tyrants ascend their bloody throne. This is not said for effect ; but because it is believed to be a truth, which we must hear often, in order to be awake to duty. If we sleep, we shall be bound and enslaved. Constant vigilance, alone, is constant security. When the poisoning insects first light upon the slumbering giant, if he be aroused at once, he may crush them with his hand ; but if they remain long, and begin

their corruption, pain, perhaps, will only awaken him to a sense of his powerless and degraded condition. Let every man, then, among us, be he high or humble, as he has opportunity, strive to keep pure our republic. Let no one forget that his words and conduct, are a part of the national character. Let him, day by day, seek to increase the power of christian principles, over his own mind, and the minds of others. Let him feel that 'liberty is a trust,' and that he is answerable to God, for his fidelity to it. When every citizen feels this, then, as a nation, we shall be moving onward to great glory.

We were a chosen people. A leader was raised up to us, that man whose birth we this day celebrate; he led us through the perils of the revolution, he supported and fixed the constitution in the day of its feebleness. Shall we not be faithful to our privilege. Our country is a beacon to the struggling nations of Europe. Amid the storm and the tempest, they look to us. Shall not the light burn clear. Shall not every foul corruption, that would dim its beams, be kept far away. If our country is to be a leader, oh! let her be one of wisdom and of power. If we are the pioneers, let us hew the way fairly, lay down the road smoothly, and make a great highway for the nations of the earth to march onward to freedom and to glory. Then, when another century shall have rolled away, it may be, that freemen from beyond the Rocky Mountains, representatives from the mighty republics of regenerated Europe, may meet beneath the star spangled banner, to smile at those days when 'kings reigned, and princes decreed justice'; to hold forth our Declaration of Independence as the 'Magna

Charta' of Christendom, and to pronounce with enlightened and sober reverence, the name of **GEORGE WASHINGTON**.

Gentlemen of the Washington Light Infantry Company,

It is by your request, that I have spoken at this time. I have endeavored to utter words of truth and soberness; to speak with earnestness and solemnity, because, I thought, the times, the occasion, and my own sense of responsibility, demanded it of me. You will allow me, in conclusion, to say, to you, and to the gentlemen of the Artillery, who unite with you in this celebration, that you all belong to that class, to whom our country looks for support and prosperity. You are young men, and have, therefore, much to do, as citizens of these United States. God Almighty, grant, that you may be faithful, and that you may, as individuals, have that intelligence, that love of truth and goodness, that strength of religious principle, which shall make you, like **WASHINGTON**, useful men on earth, heirs of endless happiness in Heaven.

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AN

ORATION,

DELIVERED AT THE REQUEST OF THE
WASHINGTON LIGHT INFANTRY COMPANY,
IN NEWBURYPORT,

FEB. 22, 1832

AT THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
OF THE
BIRTH-DAY OF WASHINGTON.

BY THOMAS B. FOX

NEWBURYPORT
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1832



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